

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's egregious attempt to help their cronies retain its stranglehold on the nation by biased and partisan broadcasting on the eve of the election, is only the most glaring of an ever growing trend by these special interest groups who masquerade as legitimate news outlets. It is the FCC's duty to act on behalf of the public and stop allowing the further erosion of genuine fair and balanced news reporting.

The co-opting of the public airwaves by monied conglomerates who use their influence to serve their interests, rather than the public's, is one of the greatest threats to democracy facing our country today. It is long past time to get our mainstream media out of bed with the powers that be, and back to their Constitutionally prescribed purpose of speaking for the people.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.